

## Region 3

### Southwestern Region

Professional staffs within the New Mexico and Arizona State Forestry organizations deliver the Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF) Program to a combined population of more than 6.9 million people in 929 communities across the two States. State program coordinators and volunteer coordinators cooperate closely with nonprofit organizations, State tree councils, utility companies, volunteers, and other partners to carry out locally developed State U&CF plans, which seek to create sustained U&CF programs within each community. In fiscal year (FY) 2002, 152 communities in the Southwestern Region were actively participating in the U&CF Program.

Together, Arizona and New Mexico received nearly \$620,000 in Federal U&CF funding in FY 2002, which they matched with more than \$1,053,000 in funding and leveraged support.

Devastating wildfires dominated the landscape of Arizona and New Mexico during FY 2002, affecting the management situation and delivery of all Cooperative Forestry (CF) programs as the fires burned forests and homes across hundreds of square miles. These events sparked new responses to wildfire issues, including the formation from within the Arizona Community Tree Council of a new nonprofit group, Trees for the Rim, which directly provides emergency recovery assistance to private homeowners within fire-affected communities. To date, Trees for the Rim has secured more than \$275,000 in private donations to support

this work. Funding supplies materials and training for private land watershed recovery within communities, training in defensible space, firewise landscaping, and the use of plant materials to mitigate fire losses. U&CF staffs in both States have been leaders in public education efforts responding to the massive bark beetle outbreaks that are currently devastating both urban and wildland forest landscapes.

More traditional U&CF issues related to street and city trees continue to receive attention in both States. New Mexico launched its Albuquerque Tree Initiative, a nonprofit effort for assisting the State's largest city with meeting tree replacement needs. The Think Trees group in New Mexico continues to provide arborist and tree care education to the State's green industry in an annual conference that reaches more than 250 participants.

The Arizona Community Tree Council's annual conference brought together some 150 arborists and tree care workers for training, as did the annual arborist certification, electrical safety, and tree worker education workshops, which are conducted in Spanish and English. The council sponsors bimonthly educational workshops, providing important continuing education opportunities for the green industry statewide.

Both States provide financial and/or technical support directly to communities and nonprofit groups to develop local U&CF programs and activities.

## Arizona

### Program Overview

The State of Arizona's U&CF Program is administered by the Natural Resources Division of the Arizona State Land Department, where it is delivered by a program coordinator and a volunteer coordinator in association with other department personnel and a statewide network of affiliated partners and volunteers. It serves some 418 communities in Arizona, which has a rapidly growing population, now exceeding 5.2 million people, in a large, geographically, ethnically, and botanically diverse State.

### Program Accomplishments

Basics in arboriculture classes are offered six times per year throughout Arizona. The classes prepare students to become ISA Certified Arborists and Tree Workers. Since 1992 this effort has helped increase the number of certified arborists working in Arizona from 19 to 312. Recognizing the need for training in both Spanish and English, the U&CF Program offers these workshops in both languages.

Annually, the Governor issues an Arbor Day proclamation, which is used to kick off a program of education and community outreach featuring an Arbor Day poster contest for fifth-graders statewide. Winners are recognized in an Arbor Day ceremony at the State Capitol.

### The Arizona Community Tree Council

The Arizona Community Tree Council, organized as a nonprofit group, advises the State Land Commissioner on U&CF issues, provides considerable technical and logistical support to the program, and sponsors an annual conference introducing new urban forestry techniques. The council also conducts seven workshops per year, covering subjects such as tree appraisal, tree hazards, tree climbing, and related topics. These workshops attract 1,200–1,500 people annually. The Land Department, council, and utility company partners also sponsor an annual electrical line safety workshop for tree workers, featuring presentations in English and Spanish.

### Volunteer Program

Program goals, developed by the Tree Council, Land Department staff, and associates, and adopted in Arizona's U&CF plan, emphasize encouraging volunteerism, recognizing urban forest resources as a vital part of community infrastructure, and providing high-quality care to those resources. In FY 2002, the staff and council recognized the importance of tree management in the community interface with the State's natural forests. Following the devastating fires in June and



R-3-Arizona. Trees for the Rim.



R-3-Arizona.

July, the council formed a new nonprofit group, Trees for the Rim, which, in partnership with Safeway Corp., will assist with reforestation and restoration in private acreages within the fire area. By the end of FY 2002, \$275,000 had been raised to assist with this effort. The long-range plan foresees using the private donations to leverage grant funding to expand and continue these efforts for at least 5 years.

### Statistical Highlights

Number of participating communities: 79  
Number of technical assists to communities: 176  
Number of training hours provided: 6,380  
Number of days of volunteer assistance: 1,100  
Number of Tree City USA communities: 14

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## New Mexico

### Program Overview

The State of New Mexico's U&CF Program is administered by the New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department, Forestry Division, where it is delivered by a program coordinator and a contract volunteer coordinator in association with other department personnel and a statewide network of affiliated partners and volunteers. The New Mexico Urban Forest Council advises the State forester on U&CF issues. The program is available to a State population of 1.8 million people in 511 communities. Program goals and objectives are contained in a 5-year plan, which was revised in early FY 2002.

### Program Accomplishments

Recovery of urban forest landscapes following the recent extraordinary fire season continues to be a strong focus of the U&CF Program. Likewise, the program's work with public fire education and hazard reduction through the Backyard Tree Farm and Twenty Communities efforts keeps U&CF actively engaged in rural and urban areas. As part of the National Fire Plan and other programs, defensible space projects in 11 communities were granted \$2.4 million, assisting 341 landowners in treating 1,296 acres. The Forestry Division Web site includes information about community fire prevention programs.

In cooperation with the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), the New Mexico Association of Nursery Industries, and the nonprofit group Think Trees (<http://www.thinktrees.org>), the U&CF Program coordinator helps produce an annual Think Trees conference, showcasing the best in tree care training and techniques. Other U&CF Program highlights include an annual statewide Fifth Grade Arbor Day Essay Contest, the Governor's Arbor Month Proclamation, and the Tucumcari/Clovis Regional Tree Care Conference, hosted by the community Tree Boards.

### Volunteer Program

New Mexico's contract Volunteer Coordinator; Tree New Mexico Inc., (TNM) has served the program for 12 years. TNM has a volunteer base of 1,700 and maintains contacts with some 2,800 interested citizens, students, and businesses. During FY 2002, TNM worked with agency staff, volunteers, training-session participants, and students to plant more than 66,000 trees in 120 separate plantings. TNM also provided classroom training to nearly 1,786 students at 10 New Mexico schools. The TNM newsletter Tree Press and its River Rescue Citizen Action Guide and River Rescue Program Guide all complement the U&CF Program and help it reach new people. As a founder of the recent Albuquerque Tree Initiative and operator of a National Tree Trust Regional Grow-out facility, TNM enhances the U&CF Program beyond its contractual volunteer coordination duties.



R-3. Youth in Albuquerque Tree Initiative Kickoff event.



R-3. Albuquerque Tree Initiative Kickoff.

### Statistical Highlights

Number of participating communities: 73  
Number of technical assists to communities: 51  
Number of training hours provided: 3,057  
Number of days of volunteer assistance: 4,844  
Number of Tree City USA communities: 8

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